

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 110706Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2582
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 HELSINKI 1068

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MPOL, MNUC, PAIN, PROP, FI, UR
SUBJECT: FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTRY SATISFIED WITH GROMYKO VISIT

REF: (A) HELSINKI 1011, (B) HELSINKI 1042

1. SUMMARY. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT THE FINNS ARE SATISFIED WITH THE GROMYKO VISIT ON THE OCCASION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FINNISH-SOVIET TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP, COOPERATION AND MUTUAL ASSISTANCE (FCMA). THERE WERE NO SURPRISES IN SOVIET STATEMENTS REGARDING THE FCMA TREATY. THE MFA OFFICIAL SAID GROMYKO'S CHARACTERIZATION IN HIS APRIL 4 SPEECH (REF A) OF FINLAND'S POSITION ON THE NEUTRON WEAPON WAS "IMPRECISE." THE OFFICIAL DISCOUNTED PRESS REPORTS HERE OF A SOVIET/FINNISH "JOINT INITIATIVE" AT THE SPECIAL UN SESSION ON DISARMAMENT (SSOD). WHILE NOT WISHING TO
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COMMENT ON THE CRITICISM OF THE UNITED STATES CONTAINED IN GROMYKO'S APRIL 4 SPEECH, THE MFA OFFICIAL SAID SUCH BEHAVIOR IS PERHAPS NOT NORMAL IN INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE BUT IS NOT UNPRECEDENTED EITHER. END SUMMARY

2. A HIGH MFA OFFICIAL EXPRESSED SATISFACTION TO THE EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR APRIL 7 WITH THE VISIT TO

FINLAND OF SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREI GROMYKO
APRIL 4-6 (REFTELS). HE SAID GROMYKO WAS RELAXED AND LOW
KEY THROUGHOUT HIS VISIT AND SEEMED TO LOOK UPON THE
OCCASION AS ESSENTIALLY CEREMONIAL. SOVIET STATEMENTS
CONCERNING THE FCMA TREATY DURING THE VISIT CONTAINED NO
SURPRISES, RATHER REAFFIRMING INTERPRETATIONS AND FORMULA-
TIONS WITH WHICH THE FINNS ARE COMFORTABLE. THE COMMUNIQUE
ISSUED AT THE CLOSE OF GROMYKO'S VISIT WAS SHORT, GENERAL
AND BLAND. IT THUS CONTRASTED SHARPLY WITH THE COMMUNIQUE
ISSUED ON A SIMILAR OCCASION FOLLOWING THE
VISIT TO FINLAND IN 1973 OF THEN SOVIET PRESIDENT PODGORNYY
ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FMCA. THE
COMMUNIQUE ISSUED ON THAT OCCASION WAS EXTREMELY LONG AND
DETAILED, AND INCLUDED SPECIFIC REFERENCES TO INTER-
NATIONAL ISSUES OF THE DAY. THE MFA OFFICIAL SAID THAT
THIS TIME, HOWEVER, THE SOVIETS HAD EXPRESSED NO INTEREST
IN A SUBSTANTIVE COMMUNIQUE.

3. THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR NOTED THAT IN HIS APRIL 4
SPEECH, GROMYKO HAD EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION THAT
FINLAND OPPOSES THE PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE
NEUTRON WEAPON AND SUPPORTS THE PROPOSAL FOR TALKS ON A
BILATERAL AGREEMENT TO BAN THE WEAPON. HE ASKED IF
GROMYKO HAD ACCURATELY CHARACTERIZED THE FINNISH POSITION
ON THE NEUTRON WEAPON. THE MFA OFFICIAL REPLIED THAT
GROMYKO'S STATEMENT HAD BEEN "IMPRECISE." HE SAID
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FINLAND'S POSITION CONTINUES TO BE AS PREVIOUSLY STATED
BY PRESIDENT KEKKONEN: FINLAND OPPOSES THE DEVELOPMENT OF
ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION,
INCLUDING THE NEUTRON BOMB. THE MFA OFFICIAL SAID THAT
FINLAND HAS NOT EXPRESSED ITSELF SPECIFICALLY ON THE
SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON THE NEUTRON WEAPON.
HE POINTED OUT THAT AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE, FINLAND
SUPPORTS ALL NEGOTIATIONS CONCERNING THE REDUCTION OF
NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

4. THE MFA OFFICIAL WENT ON TO DISMISS REPORTS THAT
APPEARED IN THE FINNISH PRESS ON APRIL 7 OF A POSSIBLE
SOVIET/FINNISH "JOINT INITIATIVE" IN THE FORTHCOMING
SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT AT THE UNITED NATIONS.
SOME PRESS REPORTS HAD INTERPRETED FINNISH FOREIGN
MINISTER VAYRYNEN AS TALKING OF A JOINT FINNISH/SOVIET
MEASURE. THE MFA OFFICIAL STATED CATEGORICALLY THAT
FINLAND HAS NOT DISCUSSED ANY SPECIFIC "JOINT INITIATIVES"
WITH THE SOVIET UNION. HE SAID FINLAND HAS CONSULTED
WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND SEVERAL OTHER COUNTRIES -- AND
WILL CONSULT WITH THE UNITED STATES LATER THIS
MONTH -- CONCERNING POSSIBLE DISARMAMENT MEASURES AT THE

SSOD.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 HELSINKI 1068

5. THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR SAID THE EMBASSY HAD NOTED THAT GROMYKO IN HIS APRIL 4 SPEECH HAD CRITICIZED THE UNITED STATES ON THE NEUTRON WEAPON ISSUE; HE ASKED WHETHER IT IS NORMAL OR USUAL FOR A THIRD COUNTRY TO BE SO CRITICIZED IN THE KIND OF BILATERAL OCCASION BEING CELEBRATED BY THE SOVIET UNION AND FINLAND. THE OFFICIAL RESPONDED THAT SUCH BEHAVIOR IS PERHAPS NOT NORMAL IN INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE BUT NOTED THAT ON THE OTHER HAND IT IS ALSO NOT UNPRECEDENTED. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE WOULD NOT WISH TO COMMENT ON WHAT SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES CHOSE TO INCLUDE IN THEIR PRESENTATIONS. HE SAID HE HAS "TAKEN NOTE" OF THE EMBASSY'S REFERENCE TO THE INCIDENT.

6. COMMENT: THE SOVIET UNION WAS, AS ALWAYS,
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INDEFATIGABLE IN EXTRACTING MAXIMUM PROPAGANDA VALUE FROM THIS LATEST ANNIVERSARY OCCASION. ONCE AGAIN THERE WERE LITERALLY SCORES OF CEREMONIES, OBSERVATIONS, MEETINGS, EXCHANGES, SPEECHES AND PRESS STORIES AND ANALYSES CONCERNING THE FCMA TREATY, THE STELLAR FEATURE OF THE CELEBRATIONS BEING THE GROMYKO VISIT TO FINLAND. ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION SUPPORTS THE VIEW OF THE FINNISH FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT THE GROMYKO VISIT WENT SMOOTHLY AND UNVENTFULLY AS FAR AS RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE CONCERNED. LACK OF INTEREST ON THE PART OF THE SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES IN PUSHING FOR A LENGTHY AND DETAILED COMMUNIQUE PROBABLY REFLECTS SOVIET SATISFACTION THAT SOVIET AND FINNISH VIEWS AND INTERPRETATIONS CONCERNING THE TREATY ARE ESSENTIALLY IDENTICAL. THE FINNS SEEMED SOMEWHAT EMBARRASSED BY GROMYKO'S LACK OF TACT IN CRITICIZING THE U.S. IN HIS APRIL 4 SPEECH AND FOR THEIR PARTY MADE NO PUBLIC REFERENCES IN HELSINKI TO THE NEUTRON WEAPON ISSUE. (PRIME MINISTER SORSA APPARENTLY RESTATED THE FINNISH POSITION ON THIS ISSUE DURING HIS VISIT IN MOSCOW). WE FOUND IT INTERESTING THAT THE SOVIET DELEGATION APPARENTLY DID NOT PRESS THE FINNS FOR A COMMUNIQUE THAT WOULD HAVE INCLUDED AN ANTI-NEUTRON WEAPON STATEMENT. RIDGWAY

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